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HEADLINE: City's senators elect McFadden; Delegation: Sen. Nathaniel J. McFadden will replace former Sen. John A. Pica Jr., who resigned Jan. 1; in the interim, Sen. Ralph M. Hughes filled the void.

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BODY:

BALTIMORE'S senators last week elected Sen. Nathaniel J. McFadden, the Democratic lawmaker from East Baltimore's 45th District, as chairman of the city's Senate delegation, replacing former Sen. John A. Pica Jr., who abruptly resigned Jan. 1.

Sen. Perry Sfikas, the freshman legislator from Southeast Baltimore's 47th District, was elected vice chairman.

When Pica exited the Senate, Sen. Ralph M. Hughes, the delegation's No. 2, stepped up to fill the void for 16 brief, shining days of the new year.

The city senators elected McFadden and Sfikas on Thursday, leaving Hughes to deliver the news to the rest of the Senate the next morning.

"I've enjoyed my long tenure as delegation chairman," Hughes told the Senate, drawing a round of laughter.

Not to be outdone, Senate President Thomas V. Mike Miller congratulated the newly elected delegation leaders and thanked Hughes for chairing the group, albeit for just over two weeks.

"I don't think it was as tough as serving as vice chairman for the previous chair," Miller said, referring to the at-times controversial Pica.

Juxtaposition in talk makes Townsend a crime-fighter

Close listeners to Gov. Parris N. Glendening's State of the State speech last week may have been a bit taken aback by the credit he dished out to his running mate.

"Kathleen Kennedy Townsend, our outstanding lieutenant governor and my partner in governing this state, has focused much of her energy on making Maryland a safer place for families to live and work," Glendening said.

"In the first nine months of last year, crime decreased 2 percent, overall," he continued.

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Huh? Crime-fighting Kathleen?

Even the lieutenant governor saw the humor in the juxtaposition.

When tongue-in-cheek congratulations were offered for her success on the streets, she retorted:

"I was disappointed the headline didn't say 'Townsend reduces crime in state by 2 percent.' "

Miedusiewski on the radio, host of 'Capital Caucus'

American Joe Miedusiewski, the former state senator-turned-lobbyist, has taken to the airwaves again for the first time since running for governor in 1994.

Miedusiewski, a lobbyist for the Semmes Public Affairs group, is now the host of a weekly radio show, "Capital Caucus," on WNAV-AM in Annapolis, 1430 on the dial.

The half-hour interview show -- which airs at 7 p.m. Tuesdays -- premiered last week, featuring a one-on-one with state Sen. Robert R. Neall, the Anne Arundel County Republican who replaced the late Sen. John A. Cade from the 33rd District.

Tonight, Miedusiewski chats with Charles W. Ehart, who heads the alcohol and tobacco tax unit of the state comptroller's office.

The subject will be the regulation of microbreweries, a topic of proposed legislation this year.

Miedusiewski has proven himself a good talker. Little known outside Baltimore as a senator, he managed to win 18 percent of the vote in 1994, running second behind Parris N. Glendening in a four-candidate primary.

The show is scheduled to continue until the legislature adjourns in April.

State officials to unveil Maurer portrait Friday

State officials are scheduled Friday to unveil a portrait of the late Lucille Maurer, Maryland's first woman state treasurer and 17-year veteran of the House of Delegates from Montgomery County.

The portrait of Maurer, who died of a brain tumor in June at age 73, will be placed in the Calvert Room -- the site of the old House chamber -- on the first floor of the State House.

It will hang alongside portraits of a variety of Calvert family members, including the first, second and last Lords Baltimore; Margaret Brent, a businesswoman and landowner who in 1648 became the first woman in the New World to request the right to vote of a Colonial government; and the late Sen. Verda F. Welcome, the first black woman in the Maryland Senate.

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GRAPHIC: PHOTO 1, SUN STAFF, Chairman: Sen. Nathaniel J. McFadden, Democratic lawmaker from the 45th District, will head Baltimore's Senate delegation.; PHOTO 2, SUN STAFF, Vice chairman: Sen. Perry Sfikas, a freshman legislator from Southeast Baltimore's 47th District, is vice chairman.

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